

A REMEMBRANCE OF JOHN G. FRANCLEMONT

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John G. Franclemont, Jack to friends and colleagues, is a keen student of the Lepidoptera and a superb field naturalist. He was born on 15 April 1912 and raised in Buffalo, New York. He began collecting moths and butterflies at a very early age and was well instructed in the fine points of spreading specimens by an uncle. Summer vacations were spent on a farm where Jack's natural history interests and skills were further developed. Then, for several summers he was a nature counsellor at a Boy Scout camp in the Adirondack Mountains. By the time Jack entered Cornell University he knew that he wanted to become a specialist in the Lepidoptera, but he studied broadly and became well grounded in history, literature, and natural history generally with special emphasis on insects, plants, birds, and mammals. Soon, he met professor William T. M. Forbes, then the dean of Lepidopterists in North America, and the two became close associates. Jack Franclemont, Karl Krombein (also from Buffalo and now a Senior Scientist of the Department of Entomology, Smithsonian Institution), Laurence Rupert (a high school mathematics teacher in Horseheads, NY), and Ross Arnett were close friends during his undergraduate years. Many of Jack's fellow students also have became well-known entomologists including Ross Arnett, Jr., John Belkin, William Bodenstein, Eugene Gerberg, Karl Krombein, Woodrow Middlekauff, Eugene Munroe, L. L. Pechuman, Harvey Scudder, and Henry Townes. He received a BS degree in 1935 and was awarded the Ph.D. degree in 1953, both from Cornell University.

When WWII broke out, Jack entered the Army Medical Corps as an enlisted man. Subsequently, he went through officers' candidate school to become a commissioned officer. He served as a mosquito specialist in the Solomon Islands in the South Pacific and in the Philippines. Sometimes his unit arrived on islands while the Marines were still endeavoring to secure them. He collected intensively on Guadalcanal, Bougainville, New Georgia, and at Baguio in the Philippine Islands. He was moved westward from island to island and was stationed briefly in Japan at the end of the war. He was honorably discharged in San Francisco with the rank of Captain.

For a brief time Jack was an assistant entomologist (1946–47) at Cornell University. Then, he was an entomologist with the Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine (the predecessor of the Systematic Entomology Laboratory), U.S. Department of Agriculture at the Smithsonian Institution from 1947 to 1953 where he was responsible for research, curation, and identification of noctuid and geometroid moths. In 1953 he became an associate professor of entomology at Cornell University, in 1959 full professor, and in 1982 emeritus. He continued to teach the advanced insect systematics course in Lepidoptera and to advise graduate students for several years after retirement.

During Jack's professional career he was the acknowledged authority on noctuoid moths of the Western Hemisphere. His extensive bibliography demonstrates the breadth of his interests, particularly the clarification of many difficult species-group problems and recognition of closely similar taxa.

His personal library was developed as a hobby and an investment. It has become one of the best privately held libraries in systematic entomology, and it is far superior to those in most universities. Naturally, the major emphasis is the Lepidoptera, but it is strong in several other areas. He was actively accumulating rare books and journals while many were still available and relatively affordable. It has been given to Cornell University, but he has lifetime use of it.

Building a personal collection of moths, particularly of the macrolepidoptera, has been a driving force during most of Jack's life. Although collecting the macrolepidoptera of the United States became a monumental endeavor, he never neglected the local fauna. This interest became ever more encompassing over the years and has resulted in the amassing of probably the finest collection of moths ever assembled through personal fieldwork, spreading, and curation. The level of quality in spread specimens and genital preparations set new standards, which, through his students, will influence North American museum collections well into the future. The material he provided for the teaching collection for the introductory insect systematics course was far more extensive and better prepared than the main collections of most universities, and typically was destroyed systematically by budding systematists. While he was a student and for the first few years in the 1950's he collected assiduously a locality on upper Six Mile Creek in the Ithaca watershed area, almost always accompanied by his dog. This area may be the best sampled locality for macrolepidoptera in the United States. He collected for several years at Arlington, Virginia and full summers in the following areas: Lakehurst, New Jersey; Highlands, North Carolina; Madera Canyon, Santa Rita Mountains (four years), Flagstaff (three years), and Chiricahua Mountains (three years), Arizona; and Big Timber, Montana. He has given most of his estimated 350,000 specimen collection to the Department of Entomology, Cornell University where it is well housed and readily accessible to workers. He gave the Pyraloidea and microlepidoptera to the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution.

As well as collecting adults he has reared many broods of larvae. He established or verified hosts and preserved larvae of several hundred species. During collecting seasons one or more glass containers each with a single gravid adult female moth might be seen in his lab. Often viable eggs were laid to be followed with the provision of an array of suspected plant host leaves for the newly hatched larvae to try. The guessing game always began with knowledge of associated species' larval food plants. Success in finding an acceptable host plant was reasonably frequent, but the inclemency and relatively short growing season of the Ithaca area sometimes cut off the food supply before a brood had finished eating or the reverse when a southern species was captured on a spring field trip. Rearing larvae was a prominent part of all field work and often was one of the duties of a series of graduate student-field assistants. Many students have been field assistants and have gained immeasurably from their experiences.

Throughout his career Jack's interest in moths and many other insects, excellent memory, knowledge of the literature, true interest in students, and fine sense of

humor have served as a foil for many developing scientists. For most of his years at Cornell his schedule varied little: at the office shortly after eight, lunch in the office, dinner at home, then back to the office for the evening—an exception being the inevitable collecting on good evenings. The routine changed somewhat on Saturday and Sunday, but he was at the office even then. Any of his students and many others felt free to enter his office at any time to discuss a problem, seek advice, or talk. When a prominent visitor was in town, Jack usually arranged to have a social evening to which the graduate students and others were invited. Among many, I vividly remember one evening when Vladimir Nabokov was the guest. We students were and remain Jack's extended family. Among his Ph.D. students are George Ball (1954), Charles Triplehorn (1957), Donald Anderson (1958), Ronald Hodges (1961), Carroll Knowlton (1961), Feliciano Calora (1962), Donald Davis (1962), James Marshall (1964), Robert Dagleish (1967), Douglas Ferguson (1967), Jay Shaffer (1967), Robert Poole (1969), George Godfrey (1970), Ring Cardé (1971), David Furth (1976), Ali A. Ahmadi (1977), Timothy McCabe (1978), Frank Ramburg (1979), Richard Brown (1980), and John Rawlins (1982). Those for whom he chaired a master's degree committee or was a minor advisor for the doctoral degree are William Stockton, Mercedes Delfinado, Oliver Flint, Stuart Neff, Benjamin Foote, Lloyd Knutson, Albertus Bratt, Siu-Lam Lee, Thomas Pliske, Thomas Wood, Robert Dietz, Jay Abercrombie, Arthur Shapiro, Andre Comeau, Jorma Tahvanainen, Kuo-Ching Feng, John Burton, James Liebherr, Frank Slansky, Stanley Tuckwell, J. Mark Scriber, Ronald Kugler, Mark Lacey, Judith Abrams, Daniel Bickel, Stuart Krasnoff, and James Miller.

Jack was a true mentor to his students and thus provided guidance, challenges, and encouragement. He never expected them to agree with him but rather relished the differences and anticipated independence of thought. Much of his teaching and perhaps that for which he is best remembered was on a one-on-one basis. He worked best with self-motivated individuals. He effectively developed a sense of self confidence in his students that has helped them immensely. Because there was so much personal interaction between Jack and students, they have many cherished memories that illumine his personality. Above all, Jack is highly ethical, honest, positively forthright, helpful, humorous in a gentle, nondestructive way, and caring. All his students benefited from these qualities.

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